

Accept the Word of God in your hearts
By Bishop Milan Lach, SJ

We are here in this old church and you can see where our ancestors prayed up to 600 years ago. They were poor people. They had nothing, but they had one important thing — the faith, a living faith — and this faith was encouragement for them to survive and to fight through daily life.

Look around here. We traveled comfortably by bus to arrive here. Can you imagine that they were so poor that they would walk here every day?

The people had faith, and where did they receive their encouragement in the faith? Here, in this holy church, where the priest proclaimed the Word of God.

In the Gospels, Jesus was on the move. He was an itinerant, preaching the Word of God.

But we see in the Gospels, people have this temptation to want to keep him in their village, in Nazareth or Capernaum, so that he can keep performing miracles.

But Jesus moved anyway, because the miracles were not his only message. Miracles are signs of the power of the Word of God. The Word of God can perform the greatest miracle of all: it can change our heart.

This is why Jesus was on the move. His mission was to bring the Word of God to change the human heart.

We are in this age of the internet and it permits us to have access to any information we want, to solve all our problems, but it can't change our hearts. Jesus is here with us everywhere to be with us and to change our human heart.

Let us regain the spirit of pilgrimage, of seeking the Word of God, in the highways and byways, to let it change our human heart.

Imitating our humble spiritual ancestors, let us pray for this grace. Just as they bowed their heads to enter these poor, wooden churches, let us bow our heads to accept the Word of God more deeply rooted in our hearts.

Bishop Lach delivered this homily in the Church of St. Nicholas in Ruska Bystra, Slovakia, Sept. 24, during the Horizons' "Mariapoch to Mariapoch" pilgrimage to Central Europe.

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